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## HONORING PARREN MITCHELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise a great man, a former Member of Congress, a former colleague of many who are still here, Parren Mitchell of Maryland.

Today, with the Maryland delegation, our distinguished majority leader, along with ELIJAH CUMMINGS, gave the eulogy today with both Senators present, the Governor of the State, the mayor of the city, all of the clergy, not all but a representation of it, and family and friends of this great man, Parren Mitchell.

Many Members of Congress who still serve here served with Parren, and they know he was a champion for economic and social justice.

Mr. Speaker, I want the rest of our colleagues to know about the Mitchell family. They were in the forefront of the civil rights movement; and, as a native Baltimorean, I knew full well the quality of their leadership and the extent of their effectiveness.

Parren Mitchell was a part of that leadership. He came to the Congress in 1971. He was the first African American from Maryland to serve in the Congress and the first African American since 1898 to come to the Congress from south of the Mason-Dixon line. So he made history when he came here, and he was a fighter who made progress while he was here. He was a pioneer and patriot. He fought for our country on the battlefields of Europe. He received the Purple Heart. He fought in the civil rights movement, and then fought here on the floor of the Congress until he decided to leave Congress.

It was wonderful to hear his nephew speak about him, and other representatives of the family speak about him, as an uncle and a friend and a mentor.

It was wonderful to hear the clergy speak of him as a child of the church, a truly religious person who brought his religion and his faith into public service.

It was wonderful to hear the elected officials sing his praises as ones who had learned from him, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator CARDIN. They had learned from him and worked with him. Again, he was a champion for many issues.

He was a founder of the Congressional Black Caucus, and I am so happy that he lived to see five members of the Congressional Black Caucus become chairs of the full committee in the House. We have Chairman RANGEL, who will be making our economy fairer and all of the economic justice that Mr. Mitchell talked about; and Chairman CONYERS, who did speak today about bringing the civil rights movement into our Congress, into our legislation, protecting and defending our Constitution and our civil liberties.

So it was a happy occasion, although he will be greatly missed. It was a celebration of his life that was enjoyed for many hours today in St. James Episcopal Church in Baltimore, Maryland.

Congressman SARBANES was there, along with his full family, his mother and father, former Senator Paul Sarbanes, his brother, Michael, and of course a Member of Congress we are very proud of, JOHN SARBANES.

And AL WYNN was there. We almost had all of the Maryland delegation, the Democrats, that is. And the delegation is almost all Democratic, but that is for another discussion on another day. AL WYNN was there representing the area nearest Washington, DC, but close to the service of Parren Mitchell.

When I spoke at the service I said we would be gathering here tonight to talk about Parren Mitchell and his wonderful contribution to our country and that they should tune in. But I wanted to tell you tonight what we saw today, which was a community who truly respected this great man and truly loved him and who will miss him sorely.

With the passing of Parren Mitchell, our Nation has lost one of its most passionate champions of justice and equality. I offer my deepest condolences on behalf of all of my colleagues in the House to Congressman Mitchell's family, friends, and all who loved him.

Growing up in Baltimore, I learned to revere the Mitchell family for their dedication to economic and social justice. Parren, his brother Clarence, and indeed his entire family, devoted their lives to ending racism and ensuring that our Nation's bounty was shared by all of its citizens. For that, we have all benefited. That is because their advocacy brought us closer to the ideal of equality that is both America's heritage and our hope.

The story of Parren Mitchell's life tracks the progress we've made. But it also shows how much farther we must travel to truly achieve justice for all.

At age 11, Parren Mitchell understood the reality of racism at its most violent and brutal. His older brother, Clarence, a true champion of social justice in his own right, came home one day and told of having just seen the body of a man who had been murdered—lynched—in Somerset County. In that moment, Congressman Mitchell would later say, he decided to dedicate his entire life to fighting for the rights of African Americans.

Years later, in 1950, after graduating from Morgan State, the University of Maryland refused to admit Congressman Mitchell to its College Park campus, telling him that it was "inadvisable" for blacks to attend. But that injustice would not prevent Parren Mitchell from pursuing his dream. He fought back. He won his court case. And Parren Mitchell became the first African-American graduate student at the College Park campus, and earned his master's degree in sociology. Because Parren Mitchell refused to see his dream of attending graduate school denied, many more were able to pursue their own dream of a graduate education.

Then, in 1971, when first sworn in as a Member of the House, Congressman Mitchell became the first African-American Member of Congress elected from the State of Maryland.

This achievement must have been tempered by the knowledge that he was the very first African-American elected to Congress from below the Mason-Dixon line since 1898. It took almost a century for a Black American from the South to find a seat here in the People's House.

Across the 85 years of Parren Mitchell's life—in his own story and the story of America—we see the slow march of progress. We celebrate today a man who made sure that, however slow at times, we continue to march in the right direction—toward peace, understanding, and justice for all.

Congressman CUMMINGS recently described Mr. Mitchell as "never concerning himself about fame or fortune but, rather, devoting himself entirely to uplifting the people he represented." That was apparent through his leadership as the first African American to chair the House Small Business Committee. There, he put into law guarantees that minority-owned business would share in public works and transportation contracts.

It is also a great testament to the leadership of Parren Mitchell that the organization he helped found—the Congressional Black Caucus—continues to serve as the conscience of the Congress and increase its ranks to the benefit of all Americans. I am sure Mr. Mitchell is looking down upon us today and that he is pleased that so many CBC members are here to honor him today.

With Congressman Mitchell's passing, we have lost a friend, a former colleague, and a passionate advocate for seeing that America's promise of freedom and equality are realized by all of our citizens. Whether in the Army, where he earned a Purple Heart, teaching at his alma mater, Morgan State, or serving his community as a social worker or a member of this body, Parren Mitchell dedicated his life to service. His loss leaves a void that we must work together to fill.

I hope it is a comfort to Congressman Mitchell's family and friends that so many people mourn their loss and are praying for them at this sad time.

## REMEMBERING PARREN J. MITCHELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, as a young man I worked on Capitol Hill for a United States Senator, along with the Speaker, Senator Daniel Brewster.

From time to time, Clarence Mitchell, Jr., one of the giants of American history in civil rights in America, would visit Senator Brewster; and I would have an opportunity to meet him. I was honored and awed to meet him. Many called him the 101st United States Senator. Clarence Mitchell, Jr., was the brother of Parren James Mitchell.

Shortly after I graduated from law school, I was honored by the citizens of my district who elected me to the State Senate. I went to the State Senate as a young man, but there was a young man 6 months younger than I. His name was Clarence Mitchell, III, Clarence Junior's son. We served together.